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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/807,316	03/24/2004	Morihisa Shioya	000407.00028	3820
22907	7590	02/28/2006	EXAMINER	
BANNER & WITCOFF 1001 G STREET N W SUITE 1100 WASHINGTON, DC 20001			TRAN, KHOI H	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3651	

DATE MAILED: 02/28/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/807,316

Applicant(s)

SHIOYA, MORIHISA

Examiner

Khoi H. Tran

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3651

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 December 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 8 and 9 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 5 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2-7 and 11-13 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.


## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 03/04.

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

  
**KHOI H. TRAN**  
**PRIMARY EXAMINER**

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Election/Restrictions***

1. Applicant's election without traverse of Species IV, claims 1-7 and 10-13 in the reply filed on 12/16/2005 is acknowledged.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. "a taking out position" and "a carrying-out position" lack positive identification. It is not distinct whether the claimed positions are in fact part of the claimed combination. Positive recitation of these elements are required.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Geraci 5,143,193.

Geraci '193 discloses a vending machine per claimed invention. The vending machine comprises a plurality of storing means for storing commodities, gripping means for gripping the commodities, and moving means for moving the gripping means up and

down, left and right, and back and forth (Figure 4). In operation, Geraci '193 gripping means grips the selected commodity from the storing means at a taking out position, moves the gripped commodity to a carrying-out position, and releases the gripped commodity at the carrying-out position for subsequent removal of said commodity (figures 3 and 4).

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 1 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Williams et al. 6,006,946.

Williams et al. '946 discloses a dispensing machine comprises a plurality of storing means for storing commodities, gripping means for gripping the commodities, and moving means for moving the gripping means up and down, left and right, and back and forth (Figure 1). Williams et al. '946 gripping means comprises left and right fingers and a finger drive for actuating the fingers (Figures 2-4). In operation, Williams et al. '946 gripping means grips the selected commodity from the storing means at a taking out position, moves the gripped commodity to a carrying-out position, and releases the gripped commodity at the carrying-out position for subsequent removal of said commodity (figures 3 and 4). However, Williams et al. '946 is silent as to the specific application of the dispenser within a vending environment. Nevertheless, since Williams

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et al. '946 structurally anticipates all claimed elements, it is obvious that said dispensing machine could be used in a vending environment to facilitate fee-for-product transactions.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

8. Claims 2-4, 6, 7, and 10-13 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

***Conclusion***

9. Additional references made of record and not relied upon are considered to be of interest to applicant's disclosure: see attached USPTO Form 892.

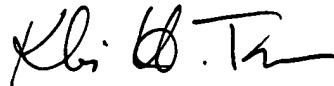
10.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Khoi H. Tran whose telephone number is (571) 272-6919. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gene Crawford can be reached on (571) 272-6911. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Khoi H. Tran', written in a cursive style.

Khoi H Tran  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3651

KHT  
02/22/2006